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# ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

## DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

### NEWS RELEASE



*Cora Campbell, Commissioner*  
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Ketchikan Area Office  
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#### WEST BEHM CANAL HERRING FISHERY ANNOUNCEMENT

Ketchikan. . . . The Alaska Department of Fish and Game announced today the forecasted mature biomass for the 2012 West Behm Canal sac roe herring fishery is 7,915 tons. This allows for a 10.6% harvest rate for a total GHL of 842 tons. By regulation (5 AAC 27.160), 10 percent of the GHL is allocated to the bait pound fishery on an annual basis. Therefore, the GHL for the 2012 West Behm Canal sac roe fishery is **758 tons**. The forecast indicates that the spawning stock will consist of 28% age-3, 28% age-4, 34% age-5, 5% age-6, 4% age-7, and 2% age-8 and older herring.

In January 2006, the board adopted regulatory language that divides the guideline harvest level by the maximum number of CFEC permits eligible to be fished in the fishery, 5 AAC 27.197(a)(2). There are currently 48 southeast sac roe seine permits eligible to fish. With a guideline harvest level of 758 tons this allows for **15.8 tons per permit**.

The department uses a Biomass Accounting (BA) model to estimate abundance and to forecast the West Behm Canal herring stock. Herring abundance is estimated, in part, using aerial surveys designed to map spawning locations and record the length of shoreline with spawn, followed by dive deposition surveys which estimate the density of eggs and the average width of the spawn. In 2011, the department documented 17.9 nautical miles of herring spawn. This is the sixth highest length of herring spawn documented by the department in West Behm Canal since 1970.

A more detailed summary for all gillnet and purse seine sac roe fisheries will be available in the **SOUTHEAST ALASKA SAC ROE HERRING MANAGEMENT PLAN** due out in March 2012.

News releases web site: <http://documents.cfl.adfg.state.ak.us/TopicContents.po>.

Office	Ketchikan	Petersburg	Wrangell	Sitka	Juneau	Haines	Yakutat
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ABWE	225-5111	772-3983	874-3215	747-3254	465-4000	766-2533	784-3220
Herring Hotline	225-6870			747-1009	465-8905		